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Study to be Approved.

The admonition to Timothy in the words, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God," is a subject that the very ordinary writer ought to be able to use to advantage every month. It not only comprehends man's duty to his God directly; but his duty to his fellow man, his family, his nation, his church and himself. In the connection in which it is found, it more particularly applies to the relation that the person addressed sustained to the church. The man who assumes the high office of shepherd of souls is required by the scriptures to be a model in all respects that he may by example, as well as by word, teach others to live as free from sin as possible and cultivate the Christian graces. He is to superadd to his faith, fortitude; and to fortitude, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity.

Wherever the seed of civilization has taken root and developed, the power of a virtuous life is recognized and felt. Why is it then that the Christian, and especially the Christian minister so often falls short of the qualifications that even the unconverted expect in him? The whole answer is contained in the few words of scripture, "Study to shew thyself approved."

No man is so thoroughly under divine influence or controlled so completely by the powers of an endless life, that he can live faultless without studying himself. As he sits upon the wall as a sentinel, he should first send the warning voice to his own heart; and see whether his daily walk and conversation comport with his high calling.

Study to shew thyself approved—this is an endless task. To be approved of God, we must be approved by virtuous men.

This implies a study of our own ways at home, in the family. If the minister, in this humblest sphere of life, is not approved by God, he lacks greatly. If he does not study himself there, he will fall into faults that reflect upon his character and detract from his power and influence to do righteous works.

It implies a study of himself in society, as a citizen. The mouth which is a fountain that pours out bitter words as well as sweet, will never be held with confidence and respect; and when a man's admonition is adapted to his own case with more directness than to any other hearer, he

can not expect to accomplish good, unless he first obeys it.

It implies a study of a man's own motives and intents of his heart. A man never knows that he is right if he acts from his impulses only. His own thoughts are as liable to be false, ridiculous or foolish as any other man's. Because they originate in his own machinery is no reason that they are truer, better and wiser than some other man's thoughts. In the study to shew thyself approved, individual thought should receive attention early in the work.

It implies that a man should study himself when he appears before people to call them from sin. Vain babblings, penny smartness, foolish language and proud gestures detract from any man's greatness wherever he moves in life. Candor and earnestness are powers that carry conviction, and inspire confidence. If he does not study himself, he may become a monster and yet believe he is harmless, virtuous and faithful to all his obligations.

Every man should frequently look upon his balance sheet of life and see how the account stands between himself, his God and his brethren. Every day he should place himself where those stood whom he came in contact, and decide whether, so far as his actions reached, he did as he would wish others to do to him.

The Syriac Teachings of the Apostles.

About forty-five years ago a number of documents were found in the Nitrian Monastery in Lower Egypt and placed in the British Museum in the department of Syriac mss. Dr. Wright, now deceased, made a study of them and showed that a portion were those the father of Church History, Eusebius cites, as preserved in the archives of Edessa. There is little doubt about the genuineness of the documents, and with the accounts of the martyrs in that place in the early propagation of Christianity, they form an interesting section of Christian literature and history.

The portion of these documents which have been translated opens with the story concerning the king of Edessa, which we have already written about in these columns, as the person who is represented as having written to Jesus and receiving an answer from him. As a result of this correspondence, Addæus, the apostle was sent to him, and he planted Christianity in his nation. Whether all of this narrative is true, cannot be proven now, but there can be no question that Christianity was planted in that section of Lower Egypt at a very early date and continued to preserve its individuality down till about the close of the third century, when it was hidden in Paganism.

The second division of the translation is the teachings of the Apostle Addæus, and their character is so pure that they arouse no suspicion that the author had not learned of Jesus, or was not familiar with his gospel.

After he reached the king, he laid his hands upon him and healed him of the plague that afflicted him, and from which he sought relief. The king requested that the story of Jesus should be told, and to this the apostle replied as follows:

"I will withhold my peace from declaring this; since for this very purpose was I sent hither, that I might speak to and teach every one who is willing to believe, even as thou. Assemble me tomorrow all the city, and I will sow in it the word of life by the preaching which I will address to you—about the coming of Christ, in what manner it was; and about Him who sent him, why and how He sent him; and about his power and wonderful works; and about the glorious mysteries of his coming, which he spake of in the world; and about the unerring truth of his preaching; and how and for what cause he abased himself and humbled his exalted Godhead by the manhood which he took, and was crucified and descended to the place of the dead, and broke through the enclosure, which had never been broken through before, and gave life to the dead by being slain himself, and descended alone, and ascended with many to his glorious Father, with whom he had been from eternity in one exalted Godhead."

Farther he says: "For, lo! that which was ours have we forsaken, as we were commanded by our Lord; because without by purse and without scrips, bearing the cross upon our shoulders, were we commanded to preach his gospel in the whole creation, of whose crucifixion, which was for our sakes, for the redemption of all men, the whole creation was sensible and suffered pain." The king commanded that silver and gold should be given him, and in the above language he refused it.

The apostle preached his sermon and there was a great revolution in the city. "And all those who believed in Christ did Addæus receive, and baptized them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. (It is interesting to notice here that the exact language of the commission as found in Matthew is used.) And those who used to worship stones and stocks sat at his feet, recovered from the madness of paganism wherewith they had been afflicted. Jews also traders in fine raiment—here the Jews were already engaged in selling ready-made clothing—who were familiar with the law and the prophets, were persuaded, and became disciples and confessed Christ that he is the son of the living God.

A church was immediately built in the city, and soon other ones, and many were ordained to the priesthood by this apostle.

Every thing that is contained in the translation is thoroughly Christian in sentiment and harmonizes with the accounts of Jesus from other sources which are believed to be authentic. But the "Teachings of the Apostles" found in the same mss. were evidently written by a latter author. They commence in this way:

1. The apostles therefore appointed: Pray ye towards the east; because as the lightning which lighteneth from the east, and is seen even to the west, so shall the coming of the son of man be—Mat. 24: 27—that by this we might know and understand that he will appear from the east suddenly.

2. The apostles further appoint: On the first [day] of the week let there be services, and

the reading of the holy Scriptures, and the oblation; because on the first day of the week our Lord rose from the place of the dead, and on the first day of the week he rose upon the world, and on the first day of the week, he ascended up to heaven, and on the first day of the week he will appear at last with the angels of heaven.

3. The apostles further appoint: On the fourth day of the week let there be services.

4. Appoints services on Sabbath—our Saturday evening.

5. Appoints elders, deacons, subdeacons and an overseer—equivalent to watchman.

6. Appoints the celebration of the Epiphany.

7. Appoints a forty-days' fast before the time of the passion of the Savior.

8. Appoints the reading of the Gospel at the conclusion of Scripture reading, with the congregation standing on their feet.

9. Appoints a commemoration of the ascension.

10. Appoints that nothing but the Old Testament, the Prophets, the Gospel and the Acts should be read from the pulpit in the church.

11. That no one should be made a ruler who is not acquainted with the faith of the church and the ordinances and laws; and any one who is and departs, should be deposed.

12. That no one is to minister who swears or lies, or has recourse to magicians and the like.

13. That a man not steadfast should quit the ministry.

14. That the covetous and those occupied in business should not serve in the ministry.

15. That Christians should not mingle with Jews and pagans in worship.

16. Concerning receiving members who have gone back in to Jewery.

17. That the Guide should not transact church business independent of his associate ministers.

18. Commemoration of the faithful dead.

19. That the praises of David be continually repeated in the services.

20. Men who do not seek riches to be chosen to serve at the altars.

There are seven more sections which relate to matters that were local in character only.

These teachings are orthodox, and are no doubt a true index to the character of the Christianity planted in Edessa so far as they go.

The Typology of the Bible.

There are many types in the Old Testament which relate to things that have transpired under the new dispensation; but the typology that many create has no foundation in the Scriptures. Many incidents are taken, and every part is made a type of something in the history of Christ and his church.

At the present time Abraham and his immediate posterity are under consideration in the Sabbath school lessons, and we see in them types of occurrences which took place in the organization of the Christian church. Whether the events that transpired in the lives of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the heads of the twelve tribes of Israel are really meant as types, it is not worth while to deny or affirm.

All there is of benefit to us in it, is, the lessons of God's manner of dealing with his children. The result of sin is shown, as well as the reward of faith and obedience, and this is of far more importance as a theological lesson than is the mere typology of the Old Testament narrative.

In the interpretation of Scriptures, this method has been carried to extremes. It is not types and shadows so much that is needed, but the driving home of the practical truths that the Word contains.

When we consider this subject we are reminded of an article we once read about Paul's unfortunate voyage. It was entitled, "A Good Sermon Spoiled." A young minister, fresh from the theological school took this part of the apostle's history for his text, and he preached a very beautiful sermon, making the island represent heaven. The voyage represented the voyage of life, and the island heaven. The nations were good and kind, of course, when they discovered the true character of the apostle. After the discourse was concluded, an aged minister followed, and complimented the beauty of the discourse, but thought heaven would be an awful snaky place, with very strange inhabitants and too cool to be comfortable. There were elements that could be made to harmonize with a favorable view of heaven; but on the whole, the island of barbarians and vipers made a poor type of heaven.

There are many types conceived in the imagination of men that are alike ridiculous, if followed out in all their bearings, and some of these are based upon sections of Bible history.

As a comparison of real or imaginary types are of no benefit whatever in the practical works of Christianity, it is advisable to deal gently in the typology of the Bible.

The Itinerant System.

Brethren, who observe the great need there is for an arrangement of some kind through which weak churches can be served, are inquiring what system is the best. The itinerant system, which the Methodists, the United Brethren and the Evangelical Association have, is no doubt the best, but it is also open to many serious objections. Whether there can be a system that would prove more effectual, is an unsolved problem, and is a subject that should receive the consideration of our writers. Our columns are anxiously bidding for articles in this line. Why do the brethren not write? Have they no progression in this line? If we can not carry plans into effect now, plans do not cost any money and often not much of anything else. So all should be liberal with their plans that they may be compared, and may gravitate toward a common one, if possible, and when one is agreed upon, then we can go to work in harmony to carry it into effect.

It may be possible to blend the itinerant system with that used by the Presbyterians and Lutherans and frame something more adapted to our needs than either of these, and carry with it the honor of originality.

Individually, we are yet at sea on this subject of most importance relative to the future of our church.